

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L CARACAS 9047

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UNGA, VE

SUBJECT: GOV ATTENDANCE AT UNGA

REF CARACAS 8182

1. FOREIGN MINISTER ESCOVAR SALOM CONFIRMED TO ME AUG 27 THAT HE WILL HEAD THE VENEZUELAN DELEGATION AT THE UNGA. HE HAS NO FIRM TRAVEL PLANS AS YET, NOR HAS HE DECIDED WHO ELSE WILL BE ON THE DELEGATION BEYOND AMBASSADOR CONSALVI.

2. ESCOVAR SALOM SAID HE HOPED FOR A MEETING WITH THE SECRETARY DURING THE UNGA. I STRONGLY RECOMMEND THAT HE BE INCLUDED ON THE SECRETARY'S SCHEDULE OF BILATERALS. DESPITE HIS FREQUENT ABSENCES AND HIS FEUDING WITH THE CAREER BUREAUCRACY, THE MINISTER IS A FORCE FOR GOOD HERE. HIS VIEWS ON THE ISSUES OF IMPORTANCE TO US ARE VERY MUCH TO THE MODERATE SIDE OF THE GOV SPECTRUM. HIS PROFESSIONS OF GOOD WILL TOWARD THE U.S. ARE TO ALL APPEARANCES GENUINE, AS IS HIS DESIRE FOR A BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP OF LESS ACERBITY AND GREATER ACCOMMODATION.

3. ESCOVAR'S RELATIVE INFLUENCE WITHIN THE INNER COUNCILS OF THE GOV IS MORE DIFFICULT TO CALCULATE. BUT WE NOTE THAT HE HAS MANAGED TO PREVAIL SO FAR ON SUCH MATTERS AS PERSONNEL CHANGES IN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY AND THE "SOFT HANDLING OF THE ANCIENT QUARREL
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WITH COLOMBIA OVER THE GULF OF VENEZUELA. FURTHER, THE MINISTER

HAS SKILLFULLY CREATED A ROLE FOR HIMSELF AS THE GOVT'S
CONSTANT EXPOSITOR AND COMMENTATOR ON FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES.
AGAIN, HIS VOICE IS ESSENTIALLY ONE OF CAUTION AND MODERATION.

4. WE BELIEVE ESCOVAR WOULD BE PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN DIS-
CUSSING WITH THE SECRETARY THE RANGE OF ISSUES BETWEEN THE THIRD
WORLD AND THE INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES. SUCH A DISCUSSION WOULD
GIVE SUBTLE SUPPORT TO THE INCLINATION HE ALREADY HAS TO INVOLVE
HIMSELF MORE IN AN AREA THAT IS CURRENTLY THE ALMOST EXCLUSIVE
PRESERVE OF THAT EVANGELICAL THIRD-WORLDER MANUEL PEREZ GUERRERO.
ESCOVAR HAS BEEN WARM IN HIS PRAISE OF THE SECRETARY'S INITIATIVES
TOWARD A MORE REASONED DIALOGUE.

5. OTHER SUBJECTS THE MINISTER WOULD FIND OF INTEREST:
-- HOW THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT LOOKS TO THE
THE U.S. (THE GOV IS UNDER HEAVY PRESSURE
TO TAKE FULL MEMBERSHIP IN THE NAM. ESCOVAR'S
INSTINCTS ARE AGAINST WHAT HE CALLS "ALIGNING
VENEZUELA BY JOINING THE NON-ALIGNED.")
-- CONGRESSIONAL AND PUBLIC ATTITUDES IN THE
U.S. ON THE PANAMA CANAL NEGOTIATIONS.
-- HOW WE SEE THE ELEMENTS OF POSSIBLE INSTABILITY
IN THE HEMISPHERE, PARTICULARLY THE SITUATION IN
THE CARIBBEAN, IN ARGENTINA AND WITH RESPECT TO
THE CHILE-PERU-BOLIVIA TRIANGLE. (ESCOVAR
EXPRESSES CONSIDERABLE CONCERN OVER THOSE
DESTABILIZING PROBLEMS THAT THREATEN THE VENEZUELAN
VISION OF LATIN AMERICAN UNITY.)
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